DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 288 794 SO 018 588

TITLE Student Achievement Testing Program Bulletin: Grade 3 Social Studies. 1987-88 School Year.
INSTITUTION Alberta Dept. of Education, Edmonton. Student Evaluation and Data Processing Branch.
PUB DATE Sep 87
NOTE 24p.; For related document, see ED 250 250 and SO 018 573.
PUB TYPE Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Achievement Tests; Course Content; Course Objectives; *Educational Testing; Elementary Education; Foreign Countries; Grade 3; *Social Studies; Student Evaluation; Test Format; Test Manuals
IDENTIFIERS *Canada

ABSTRACT

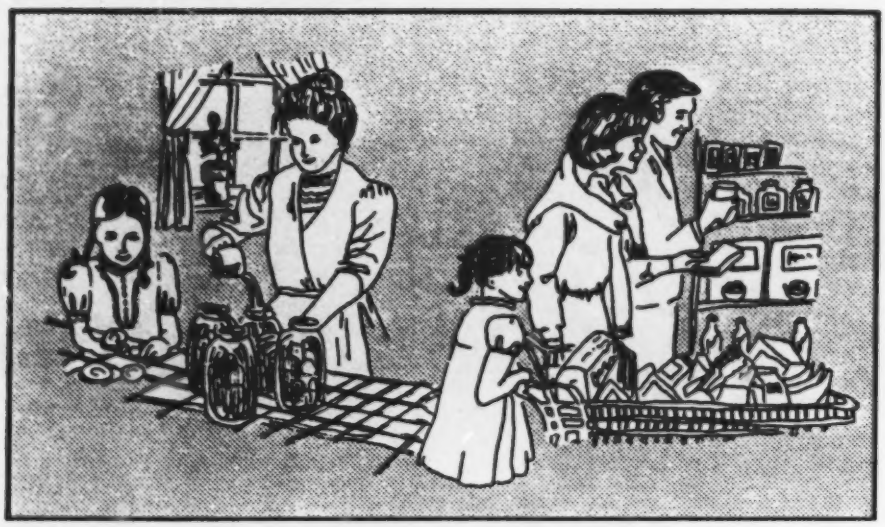
This bulletin provides general information about the achievement testing program and a description of the grade three achievement test. The general information section elaborates on the aspects of the test which involve: (1) the test's purpose; (2) the nature of the test; (3) exemptions from the test; and (4) information concerning students receiving test instructions in French. The description of the test includes: (1) an outline of the objectives to be tested; (2) the test blueprint; (3) sample questions that demonstrate the nature and complexity of the test questions; and (4) reporting categories. The test is based on the 1981 Alberta (Canada) Social Studies Curriculum. All test questions are drawn from the content of three topics: interdependence of communities in Canada today; Canadians lifestyles in past decades; and lifestyles in culturally distinctive communities. Test questions are designed around values, knowledge, and skill (inquiry) objectives. A chart delineates the weights assigned to each of the different topic areas and objectives categories. Each of the sample questions is classified according to the topic and objective on which it is based. (SM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED288794

Student Achievement Testing Program Bulletin

GRADE 3 SOCIAL STUDIES



1987-88 School Year

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S. Wolodko

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Alberta
EDUCATION
Student Evaluation and Records Branch

Published September 1987

SO018588

Sop 18588

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
GENERAL INFORMATION	2
Purpose of the Achievement Testing Program	2
Nature of the Achievement Testing Program	2
Exemptions from the Achievement Testing Program	2
Students Receiving Instruction in French	3
Administration of the Achievement Testing Program	3
Reporting Achievement Test Results	4
DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADE 3 SOCIAL STUDIES TEST	5
General Description	5
Content of the Test	6
Test Blueprints	7
Reporting Categories	8
SAMPLE QUESTIONS	8

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Bulletin

The Grade 3 Social Studies Achievement Test will be written on June 14, 1988. This bulletin provides general information about the achievement testing program, and a general description of the achievement test: an outline of the objectives to be tested, the test blueprint, and sample questions that demonstrate the nature and complexity of the test questions. Attached to the bulletin is the *Grade 3 Social Studies Curriculum Specifications* (revised April 1986) which is based on the *Program of Studies for Elementary Schools, 1982*. The curriculum specifications present the content and objectives from which the test questions are developed. Students should have access to the information in this bulletin, particularly to the sample questions.

Questions or comments regarding this bulletin should be addressed to:

Ms. Elana J. Scraba
Associate Director, Humanities
Student Evaluation and Records Branch
Alberta Education
Devonian Building, West Tower
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0L2
Phone: 427-2948

or to the nearest Alberta Education Regional Office:

Grande Prairie Regional Office
5th Floor, Nordic Court
10014 - 99 Street
Grande Prairie, Alberta T8V 3N4
Phone: 538-5130

Edmonton Regional Office
8th Floor, Harley Court
10045 - 111 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1K4
Phone: 427-2952

Calgary Regional Office
12th Floor, Rocky Mountain Plaza
615 Macleod Trail S.E.
Calgary, Alberta T2G 4T8
Phone: 297-6353

Red Deer Regional Office
3rd Floor West, Provincial Building
4920 - 51 Street
Red Deer, Alberta T4N 6K8
Phone: 340-5262

Lethbridge Regional Office
Provincial Building
200 - 5th Avenue South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 4C7
Phone: 381-5243

GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose of the Achievement Testing Program

The Achievement Testing Program provides Alberta Education, school jurisdictions, and the public with information significant at the provincial and local levels about student knowledge, understanding, and skills in relation to program objectives. This program is not intended to provide information to be used for student placement or promotion.

The achievement tests are administered on a four-year cycle in four subject areas: language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science; and at three grade levels: 3, 6, and 9.

Nature of the Achievement Testing Program

The achievement tests are specific to the program of studies prescribed by the Minister of Education. Curriculum specifications for each subject area, prepared by the Curriculum Branch and the Language Services Branch of Alberta Education, identify the major content areas, the specific learning objectives within each content area, and the emphasis that each objective is to receive. The test questions reflect these curriculum specifications.

Classroom teachers from across the province are extensively involved in developing and field testing the questions. The student responses are analysed after field testing to determine each question's discriminating power and level of difficulty. Questions may undergo several revisions before they appear on the achievement test.

The final draft of each test is examined by an Achievement Test Review Committee that includes representatives of the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents, Alberta's post-secondary institutions, and Alberta Education.

Exemptions from the Achievement Testing Program

The results of the achievement tests are significant at the school jurisdiction level. All students who have been taught the subject being tested are expected to participate in the Achievement Testing Program. Any exceptions should be identified by the principal and approved by the superintendent of schools.

The only students who may be excused from participating are those for whom the test is inappropriate. That is:

1. Students who are enrolled in an approved program that has been designed for special needs students.
2. Students who were taught the subject being tested in another semester or year.
3. Students who are enrolled in an English as a Second Language program.
4. Students who are being taught the specific subject being tested (mathematics, science, or social studies) in a language other than English.

Note: All Grade 6 students are expected to write the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test in 1988.

Exemptions for reasons other than those outlined must be approved by the Director of the Student Evaluation and Records Branch.

Students Receiving Instruction in French

French Language Arts Achievement Tests and French translations of the mathematics, science, and social studies achievement tests are available for grades 6 and 9 according to the schedule on page 4. School jurisdictions that intend to have their students write achievement tests in French must notify Alberta Education prior to March 1, 1988.

Administration of the Achievement Testing Program

The Achievement Testing Program is administered in accordance with *Examination Regulation 531/82* pursuant to Section 11(1)(g) of the *School Act*. The achievement tests must be administered on the scheduled dates and may not be rescheduled.

The achievement tests should remain unopened until the time of administration. Duplication of any test materials, including the test booklets and answer sheets, is expressly forbidden.

Immediately following the administration of the scheduled achievement tests, the principal must ensure that test booklets and answer sheets are forwarded to school board offices. The school board is responsible for collecting and forwarding to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch all test materials that contain students' responses. Further details regarding procedures for returning these materials to the Branch will be issued when the achievement tests are delivered. For private schools, the Regional Offices of Alberta Education assume the responsibility for collecting and forwarding test materials to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch. All unused testing materials may be retained by the school jurisdiction.

Alberta Education will supervise the scoring of all achievement tests. The scoring of achievement tests by school personnel prior to returning test materials to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch is a violation of the Examination Regulations and contrary to the intent of the Achievement Testing Program.

During 1988, the achievement tests will be administered according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, June 14, 1988 (Morning)

Grade 3	Social Studies
Grade 6	English Language Arts
Grade 9	Mathematics*

Thursday, June 16, 1988 (Morning)

Grade 6	French Language Arts

In 1989, the achievement tests will be administered according to the following tentative schedule:

Tuesday, June 13, 1989 (Morning)

Grade 3	English Language Arts
Grade 6	Social Studies*
Grade 9	Science*

*A French translation of this test is available. The French translation must be administered at the same time as the English version.

Reporting the Achievement Test Results

The provincial report presents the overall results for the province on major curriculum dimensions. Each jurisdiction will receive a district profile of student achievement to parallel the provincial report, as well as guidelines for interpreting the jurisdictional results in relation to provincial norms. Alberta Education will not issue individual statements of results to students; individual student profiles will be returned to superintendents. The results of the 1988 Achievement Testing Program will be available in October 1988.

Consistent with our current interim French Student Evaluation Policy, provincial reports will not be prepared for French translations of the achievement tests or for the Grade 6 French Language Arts Achievement Test in 1988. The Part A: Composition of the Grade 6 French Language Arts Achievement Test will be scored centrally according to the same procedures used to score Part A: Composition of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

Jurisdictions that choose to have their Francophone and/or French Immersion students write the Grade 6 French Language Arts Achievement Test and/or a French translation of Mathematics 9 will receive reports of jurisdiction and school results. Until the amount of time devoted to instruction in French is relatively uniform across the province, permitting valid and reliable interpretation of provincial data, provincial reports of achievement in French language programs will not be presented.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADE 3 SOCIAL STUDIES TEST

General Description

The test is based on the *1981 Alberta Social Studies Curriculum*. All test questions are drawn from the content of the three topics prescribed for Grade 3. These topics are: Interdependence of Communities in Canada Today; Lifestyles of Canadians in Other Times; and Lifestyles in Culturally Distinctive Communities. Content emphasis is derived from the *Grade 3 Social Studies Curriculum Specifications*.

The test consists of 50 multiple-choice questions to be answered in the test booklet. There is no separate answer sheet.

The total writing time for the test is 60 minutes. Ample time has been provided for most students to complete the test. The test is divided into three equal portions. It is recommended that rest breaks of approximately 10 minutes be given to the students between each 20-minute portion of the test.

Teachers will be requested to read aloud the general directions for writing the test while the students read them silently. Students will be required to read the individual questions by themselves without any help from their teacher.

An attempt will be made to minimize the use of difficult vocabulary. Readability is carefully monitored, both through the involvement of numerous Grade 3 teachers during the test-development process and through the field-testing process. Allowances will be made for vocabulary specific to the Alberta Grade 3 Social Studies program.

Objectives related to the development of attitudes and participation skills do not form part of this test. The weighting allocated to the development of these objectives in the curriculum specifications has been reassigned to the remaining objectives on a prorated basis.*

---

*Although these objectives are important, questions based on such objectives yield different data than is ordinarily associated with student performance on an achievement test.

The curriculum allows for the selection of a variety of communities for study in Topics A and C. Since many different communities will be studied in Grade 3 classrooms throughout the province, it is not possible to test students' recall of specific facts about any particular community. Students will therefore be tested on their recall and comprehension of general information related to the prescribed concepts and generalizations. To do well, students must understand that the community they studied is only one example of many similar communities. For example, the one culturally distinctive community about which they have learned shares many characteristics with other such communities.

To avoid the possibility of over-generalizing about the lifestyles of individuals or groups within any one culturally distinctive community, some questions in Topic C will be related to a short reading about an imaginary community.

Content of the Test

The topics and objectives on which the test questions are based are shown in the table below. (See also the test blueprint on page 7.)

Number and Distribution of Questions

Grade 3 Social Studies Achievement Test

	Value	Knowledge	Skill	Total	Emphasis in %
Topic A	2	7	8	17	34
Topic B	2	8	7	17	34
Topic C	2	7	7	16	32
Total	6	22	22	50	
Emphasis in %	12	44	44		100

Questions based on value objectives relate to understanding values and developing valuing skills.

Questions based on knowledge objectives are drawn from facts, concepts, and generalizations in each of the three topics.

Questions based on skill objectives are selected from the inquiry skills.

BLUEPRINT FOR THE GRADE 3 SOCIAL STUDIES

ACHIEVEMENT TEST

PROCESS REPORTING CATEGORY / CONCEPT REPORTING CATEGORY	VALUE CONCEPTS: Competing values and value positions	INTERDEPENDENCE OF COMMUNITIES IN CANADA TODAY: Facts, concepts, and generalizations related to the interdependence of communities in Canada today	LIFESTYLES OF CANADIANS IN OTHER TIMES: Facts, concepts, and generalizations related to lifestyles of Canadians in other times	LIFESTYLES IN CULTURALLY DISTINCTIVE COMMUNITIES: Facts, concepts, and generalizations related to lifestyles in culturally distinctive communities	TOTAL
RECALL AND COMPREHENSION: Recalls or recognizes data and transforms data into other words	10%	14%	16%	14%	54%
INQUIRY SKILLS I: Uses skills in the early stages of the Inquiry Process such as identifying the issue and gathering and organizing data		10%	8%	8%	26%
INQUIRY SKILLS II: Uses skills in the later stages of the Inquiry Process, such as analysing data and resolving the issue		6%	6%	6%	18%
VALUING SKILLS: Analyses competing values	2%				2%
TOTAL	12%	30%	30%	28%	100%

Reporting Categories

Student achievement will be analysed and reported to school jurisdictions using the following categories:

RECALL AND COMPREHENSION (ALL TOPICS): Recalls and understands facts, concepts, and generalizations.

INQUIRY SKILLS I: Uses skills in the early stages of the inquiry process such as identifying an issue and gathering and organizing data.

INQUIRY SKILLS II: Uses skills in the later stages of the inquiry process such as analysing data and resolving an issue.

VALUE CONCEPTS AND VALUING SKILLS: Recalls and understands competing values and uses skills to analyse competing value positions.

RECALL AND COMPREHENSION (TOPIC A): Recalls and understands facts, concepts, and generalizations related to the interdependence of communities in Canada today.

RECALL AND COMPREHENSION (TOPIC B): Recalls and understands facts, concepts, and generalizations related to lifestyles of Canadians in other times.

RECALL AND COMPREHENSION (TOPIC C): Recalls and understands facts, concepts, and generalizations related to lifestyles in culturally-distinctive communities.

These reporting categories and their relative emphases are shown in the test blueprint on page 7.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Sample questions are presented on the following pages. These items illustrate the nature and complexity of the questions that will appear on the test. Background information for each of the questions is provided. In addition to the keyed response, each question is classified according to the topic and objective on which it is based.

Teachers are encouraged to familiarize their students with the type of questions that will appear on the achievement test by having them work through the sample items.

Please note that this collection of questions does not represent the emphasis of the course. The weightings (or emphases) assigned to the different course objectives for the actual test are indicated in the test blueprint.

1. Which of these farms is MOST specialized?

● A wheat farm

O A wheat and hog farm

O A wheat, hog, and cattle farm

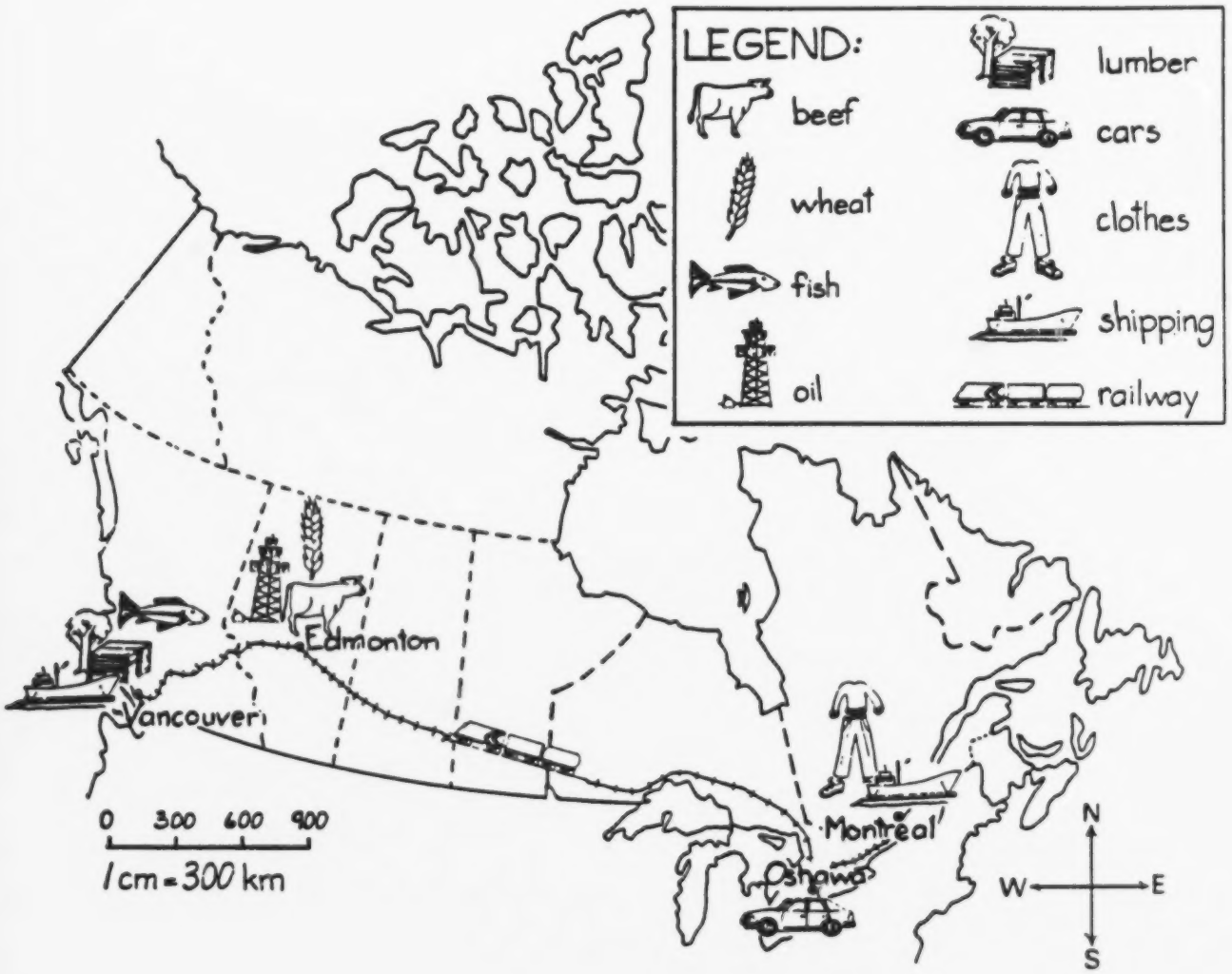
O A wheat, hog, cattle, and sugar-beet farm

PROCESS: To answer question 1, the student is required to recall the meaning and identify an example of the concept specialization.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic A, knowledge objectives - goods and services; specialization.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 35% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is a difficult one.

Mike's class is learning about communities in Canada. Here is a map in his classroom.



2. Look at the map. About how far is Montreal from Edmonton?

- O 30 km
- O 300 km
- ● 3 000 km
- O 30 000 km

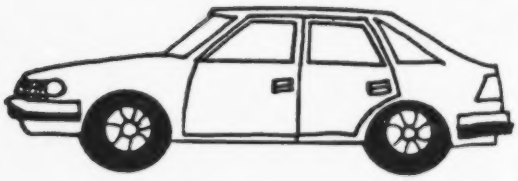
Continued

PROCESS: To answer question 2, the student is required to estimate the distance between two communities shown on the map.

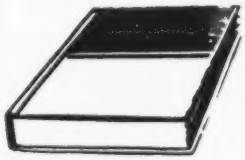
CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic A, skill objectives - determine relative distances between communities using non-standard measures and a simplified map.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 45% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is more difficult than average.

3. Which of these goods is MOST LIKELY produced in a rural community?

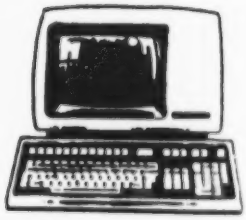


O A car



O A book

● An egg



O A computer

PROCESS: To answer question 3, the student is required to recognize a product that is produced in a rural community.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic A, knowledge objectives - goods and services; self-reliance in a rural community.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 59% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is of average difficulty.

Read the story below and answer question 4.

More people will be able to live in Sims but work and shop in Bowen. I'll be able to take dance lessons in Bowen.
If people can take the bus to Bowen, they won't shop in Sims as much. Even the theatre in Sims may close.

4. How would a store owner in Sims feel about the new bus service?

O Afraid, because more people will move to Sims

O Glad, because she will sell more goods

O Pleased, because Sims will depend more on Bowen

● Worried, because her store will lose business to Bowen

PROCESS: To answer question 4, the student is required to identify a view point about the desirability of an action.

Continued

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic A, skill objectives - analyse and evaluate data by comparing points of view about the desirability of increased interdependence for specific communities.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 58% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is of average difficulty.

5. Some people live in special communities because they

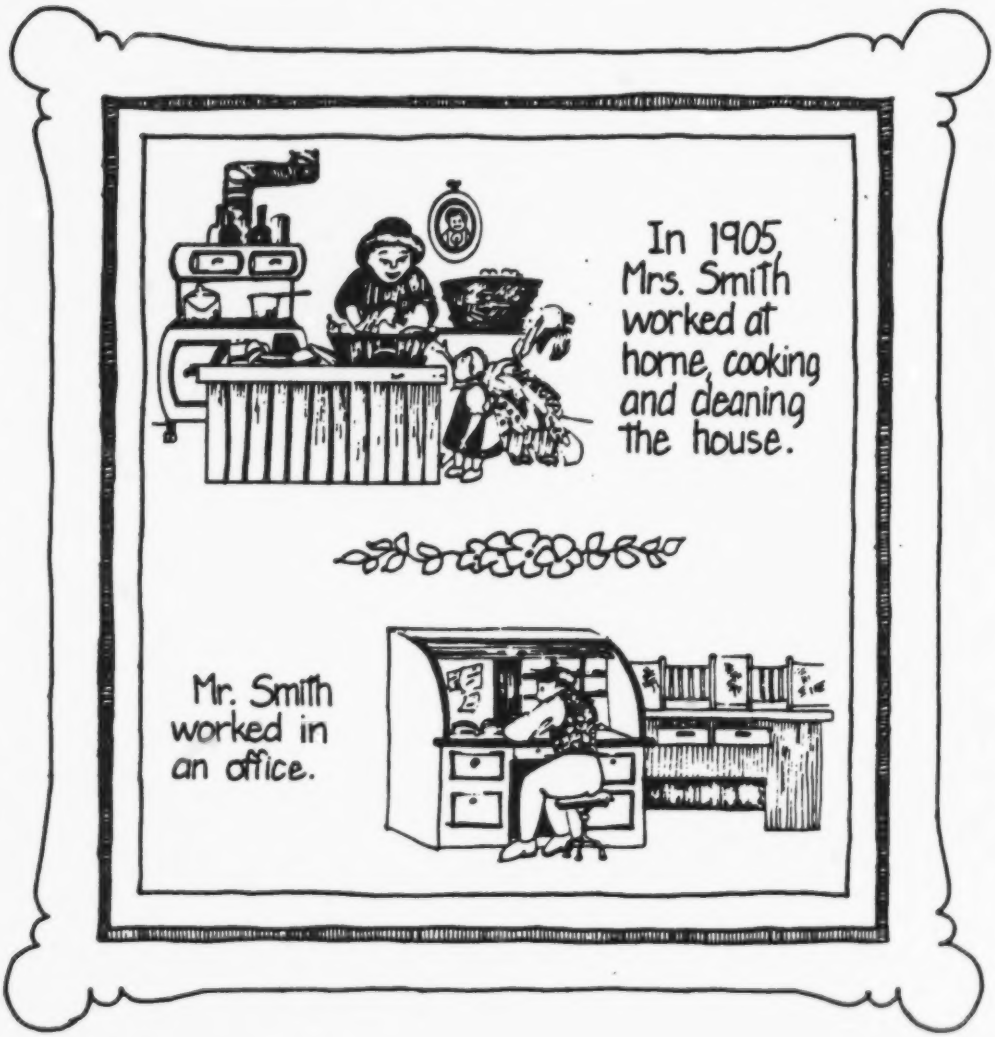
- O can learn things about other communities
- O depend mostly on other people
- ● like their own way of life
- O are in favor of change

PROCESS: To answer question 5, the student is required to recall why people may choose to live in a culturally-distinctive community.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic C, knowledge objectives - culturally-distinctive communities.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 51% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is somewhat more difficult than usual.

Use the story below to answer question 6.



6. The Smiths helped each other when Mrs. Smith took care of their home and Mr. Smith

   O ate dinner at home

   ● earned money for the family

   O visited with the neighbors

   O cleaned up his office

Continued

PROCESS: To answer question 6, the student is required to identify a description of co-operative behavior in an historic situation.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic B, value objectives - describe historical situations in which co-operative behavior was demonstrated.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 77% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is a relatively easy one.

7. Early settlers got hot water by

- O turning on the hot water tap
- O boiling water over a candle
- ● heating water on the stove
- O plugging in the kettle

PROCESS: To answer question 7, the student is required to identify one of the ways that early settlers met a basic need.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic B, knowledge objectives - settlement; ways pioneers satisfied physical needs.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 79% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is not difficult.

Use the story below to answer questions 8 and 9.

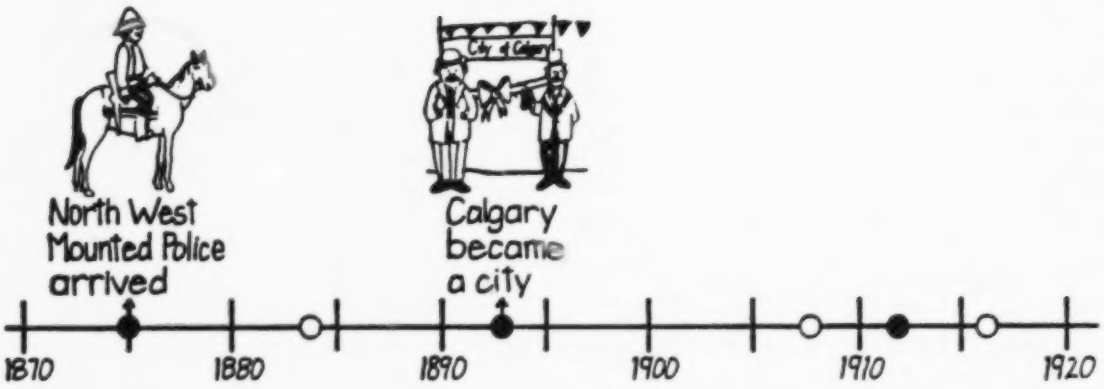
Calgary began as a fort. Fort Calgary was built by the North West Mounted Police in 1875.

In 1883, the railway reached Fort Calgary. Settlers started to arrive by train.

By 1884, there were 500 people at Fort Calgary and it became a town. In 1893, there were enough people for Calgary to become a city.

In 1912, Calgary held its first Stampede, a big rodeo and fair. In 1914, oil was found near Calgary. Oil and the Calgary Stampede have made Calgary famous.

8. Fill in the circle on the timeline that shows when Calgary held its first stampede.



PROCESS: To answer question 8, the student is required to select and fill in an appropriate entry on a timeline.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic B, skill objectives - recording events on a simple timeline.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 65% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is of average difficulty.

9. In the story, what helped Calgary grow large enough to become a town?

- O Calgary held its first stampede.
- O The North West Mounted Police arrived.
- O Oil was discovered.
- ● The railway reached Calgary.

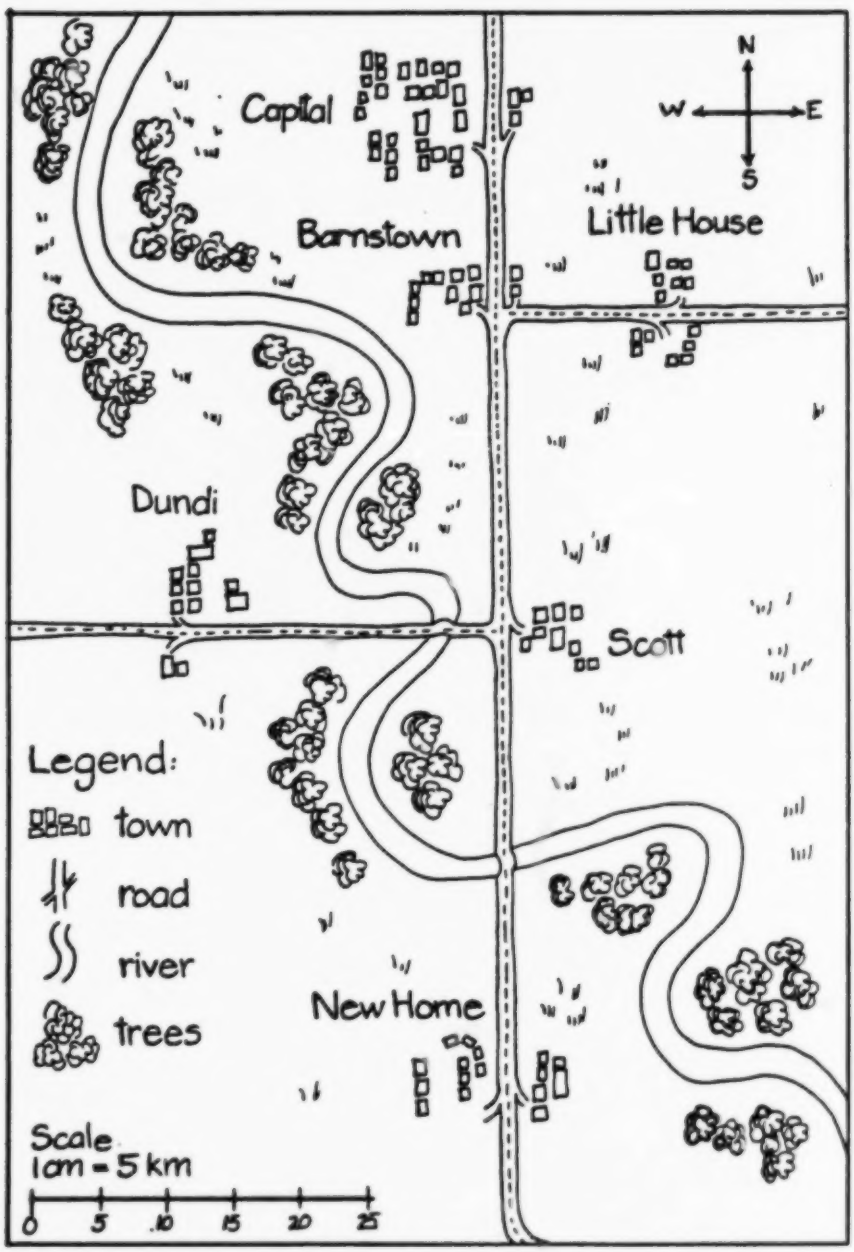
PROCESS: To answer question 9, the student is required to infer a probable cause of the growth of Calgary.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic B, skill objectives - synthesize data by relating causes and effects.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 54% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is somewhat more difficult than average.

Imagine that there is a special community in Alberta called Dundi. Most of the people of Dundi came from the same village in Europe. They call themselves "Dundians."

Use the map below to answer questions 10 and 11.



10. Look at the map. What direction is Dundi from Scott?

- O North
- O East
- O South
- ● West

PROCESS: To answer question 10, the student is required to describe the location of a community in relation to another, using cardinal directions.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic C, skill objectives - describing location, using cardinal directions.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 49% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is more difficult than average.

11. Find Dundi on the map. Which town is 25 km north and 40 km east of Dundi?

- O Barnstown
- O Capital
- ● Little House
- O New Home

PROCESS: To answer question 11, the student is required to locate a community on a simple map.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic C, skill objectives - reading and interpreting simple maps to locate communities.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 53% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is somewhat more difficult than average.

Read the story below to answer question 12.

Wendy likes to visit her friends in special communities. In one special community, Wendy asked her friends to teach her about their traditional foods.

Friends in another community taught Wendy the special songs of their grandparents.

12. This shows that Wendy likes to

- O live in a special community
- ● learn from other ways of life
- O have people accept her way of life
- O depend on herself more than on others

PROCESS: To answer question 12, the student is required to recognize behaviors that indicate a desire to learn about different cultures or customs.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATION FOCUS: Topic C, value objectives - develop an understanding of values; describe behaviors which indicate that people may prefer to live in modern heterogeneous communities.

DIFFICULTY: Of the students tested with this item, 78% chose the keyed answer, indicating that the question is an easy one.